

# The Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement Project

06.05



## Frequently Asked Questions

- 1** Why is the tunnel the best alternative for replacing the viaduct and seawall?

The tunnel maintains a critical transportation corridor for commuters and freight and is an important alternative to I-5 through Seattle and downtown. In addition, building the tunnel takes advantage of a 100-year opportunity to reconnect downtown with Elliott Bay and creates a new regional civic space for generations to enjoy. By creating a regional and local destination, new economic opportunities will also be created.

- 2** What will lowered Aurora look like?

North of the Battery Street Tunnel, SR 99 (Aurora Avenue) will be lowered to about Ward Street. Thomas, Harrison, Republican, Mercer and Roy Streets will reconnect over Aurora Avenue. Ramps will provide access at: 1) northbound off-ramp to Republican Street, 2) northbound on-ramp from Denny Way and Republican Street, 3) southbound off-ramp to Roy Street and Denny Way, and 4) southbound on-ramps from Roy and Republican Streets.

Other street improvements and revisions include the closure of Broad Street from Fifth Avenue to Ninth Avenue. Sixth Avenue will be reconnected between Harrison Street and Mercer Street and Republican Street will connect between Sixth Avenue and SR 99. Harrison Street will be rebuilt across today's Broad Street and Taylor Avenue will be rebuilt across today's Broad Street to connect to Harrison Street. Mercer Street will be widened and rebuilt from Fifth Avenue to Dexter Avenue as two-way street to coincide with the City of Seattle's Two-Way Mercer Project.

- 3** What improvements are being considered for SR 99 between Pike Street and the Battery Street Tunnel?

The project is completing environmental studies on the feasibility of building SR 99 under Elliott Avenue and Western Avenue instead of over and the extension of Victor Steinbrueck Park connecting the Pike Place Market to the waterfront.

- 4** What will be included in the supplemental draft environmental impact statement?

The supplemental draft EIS will update the preferred tunnel alternative, including proposals for a lowered Aurora Avenue, a Victor Steinbrueck Park lid, and potentially building SR 99 under Elliott Avenue and Western Avenue. It will also update information on the contingency rebuild alternative. The supplemental draft EIS will provide estimates on construction closure durations, which neighborhoods will likely be affected and for how long, and the type of impact that can be expected during construction, such as noise, access, and lighting.

- 5** How does the supplemental draft EIS help make the decision on construction approach?

The supplemental draft EIS helps identify potential impacts of construction. The project will use information in the supplemental draft EIS to weigh construction impacts with other factors like cost and schedule to further define the construction approach.

## 6 How will the project choose the construction approach?

The three lead agencies will weigh the trade-offs of various construction options to strike a balance of construction time, cost, and traffic disruptions. Public input about construction helps the project team develop an approach that reflects reasonable priorities.

## 7 How will the public be involved in developing the construction approach?

We want to hear your priorities and what tools should be considered as ways to manage transportation during construction. Additional meetings will be held with residents and businesses directly along the corridor. In early 2006, the public will be asked to review and comment on traffic analysis of the various construction approaches and the supplemental draft EIS. Public input on construction options and the supplemental draft EIS will help the project team develop the construction approach.

## 8 What does the \$2 billion from the 2005 Transportation Partnership funding package get the project?

The \$2 billion gets the project halfway to funding the tunnel. This is not enough to fund either the tunnel or the rebuilt viaduct and seawall, but it is a tremendous step forward. Other funding opportunities are being explored including: business and labor leaders working at the federal level to create a pot of money we can compete for, a regional transportation package is being developed and tolling is being investigated, just to name a few.

## 9 What is the Corps of Engineers' Seawall Feasibility Study?

Under the Corps of Engineers' Storm Damage Reduction Authority, the Corps and City of Seattle partnered in a \$9.5 million cost-shared feasibility study to identify seawall alternatives. The Corps' study will look at ways to reduce the risk of storm damage impacts to the seawall (i.e., prevention

of erosion due to tidal action and storm effects), which further protects the waterfront and other valuable resources, including people. The study will determine the Corps' federal interest in sharing the cost of construction to address the degraded condition of the Elliott Bay Seawall.

## 10 What role does the Central Waterfront Plan have in the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project?

The Central Waterfront Concept planning effort is designing the surface above the tunnel and where the viaduct is today. This project and Central Waterfront Plan are working together to define the surface street's location. The location of the surface street affects the relocation of utilities and must be determined in 2005.

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